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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

25 April 1960

SUBJECT: SNIE 65-60: Trends in Indonesia

I. The following are suggested revisions and additions to the CIA Memorandum for the Director (21 April 1960) for purposes of SNIE 65-60.

A. Paragraphs 18-24, as such, to be cut from the paper. Parts of those paragraphs and the substance of others to be brought forward as indicated in the following revisions and additions.

B. Title and Statement of the Problem:

SNIE 65-60: The Short-term Outlook in Indonesia

THE PROBLEM

To estimate the likelihood and consequences of a coup in Indonesia during the next two or three months.

C. Suggested revisions and additions to the 21 April Memorandum:

1) Para. 10, page 7: Strike the last two sentences.

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(They can be brought in better in paragraph 15a.) Insert the following:

However, there is considerable disagreement among these leaders as to the nature, method, and timing of a move to curtail Sukarno's power. Moreover, there is little basic cohesion or identity of interests among the various anti-Sukarno and anti-Communist groups and leaders.

2) Revise paragraph 14 as follows:

Nevertheless, there are a number of elements in the situation which point toward a possible army move under Nasution. These include army encouragement and support of the efforts of a number of small opposition parties banded together as the Democratic League to attract support from the Masjumi and NU parties and from the people as a whole. Also, much of the non-Communist segment of the press has launched a virulent campaign against the installation of Sukarno's appointed Parliament and against his rumored plan to include the PKI in the cabinet. Moreover, the press has attacked Sukarno personally in an unprecedented manner. It is clear to informed Indonesians that the press must have Nasution's

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support and protection in these attacks. Consequently, Nasution may find that he has created a situation, wittingly or unwittingly, in which he will have to make a move to seize power or face dismissal upon Sukarno's return. In addition to these indications of a possible army move, since Sukarno's departure Nasution has called, on short notice, a conference of his regional commanders and toured important parts of the country meeting with key military and political figures.

3) Revise paragraph 15 as follows:

Although the odds favoring an effort by Nasution and the army to seize power during the next two or three months have gone up as a result of the considerations discussed above, we believe that the chances of such a coup are still less than even.

4) New paragraphs to follow 15:

15a. If the army were to attempt a coup, Sukarno's absence from the country during the present unsettled period would seem to provide a good opportunity. The absence of former Vice President Hatta (due to depart for the US on April 29) would also be fortuitous. He

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probably would play an important role in the post-coup period, and his absence would make it easier to clear him of implication in the coup plot. However, it may be that the army leaders, if they are planning to take over, would prefer to make their effort after Sukarno comes home (at the end of May) so as to have physical control of him.

15b. It is also possible that Sukarno, either before or soon after his return, may precipitate matters by dismissing Nasution as Chief of Staff. Nasution has already served beyond the normal rotation period. Such an initiative on Sukarno's part might stimulate Nasution to attempt to take over. In such circumstances, Nasution would probably find it difficult to muster the necessary support among key military commanders for a successful coup effort.

15c. If Nasution does attempt a coup in the near future, and if he carries most of the army with him --which is possible if he retains the initiative -- we believe that he would have a better than even chance of succeeding. The PKI would probably feel forced to oppose the move with all its resources, and a prolonged period of strife

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and insecurity would almost certainly ensue. The success of the new regime in bringing the situation under control would depend to a large extent on a satisfactory settlement with the Darul Islam and the RPI rebels. We believe that under these circumstances, a settlement could be negotiated with the RPI rebels; however, the negotiations would be difficult. A settlement with the Darul Islam would be less likely.

15d. Paragraph to be provided by State: What would be the consequences of an abortive army coup effort?

15e. Paragraph to be provided by State: What is the outlook if the army does not move?

17a. If the central government were to fall suddenly under Communist control, as for example, the result of an abortive army coup effort, we believe that the Communists would have a difficult time establishing their supremacy over Java, let alone the outer islands. Important elements of the military forces, of the Darul Islam, and many non-Communist political leaders and groups probably would join together or cooperate in

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their anti-Communist efforts. If the RPI movement were still in being it would provide a rallying point for opposition. In these circumstances, anti-Communist forces could establish control over Sumatra and the Celebes as a base of operations and, with outside assistance, might be able to oust the Communist regime in Djakarta.

17b. If, however, the Communists are able to follow their present tactics of gradually expanding their influence and following and under Sukarno's wing, ease into power as a result of elections or maneuver, it will be more difficult for the anti-Communist forces to coalesce in opposition. Even in this case, however, the RPI rebels in Sumatra and the Celebes, joined by anti-Communist individuals and groups from Java, might, with outside assistance, be able to stand against a Communist regime. Over the long run, however, the viability of a separate state of Sumatra and/or the Celebes would be highly uncertain.

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